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STATE FOR S/CT:RHONDA SHORE AND ED SALAZAR  
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARAGRAPH 2 TEXT)

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SUBJECT: ICELAND: 2005 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: STATE 193439 (NOTAL)

¶1. The following text updates for 2005 the Iceland country section of the 2004 Patterns of Global Terrorism report:

Iceland has no military forces. Nevertheless, its leaders have offered strong rhetoric in support of U.S. antiterrorism policies, and the Icelandic Crisis Response Unit (ICRU), a Ministry for Foreign Affairs-run organization of peacekeepers, has contributed to counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan and elsewhere. There are no indications of the existence of terrorist groups operating inside Iceland or of trafficking of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) through the country's territory. The country's top Coast Guard official has worried publicly, however, that the surrounding North Atlantic Ocean receives insufficient surveillance by law enforcement.

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Operations  
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During the year, two eight-person ICRU Mobile Observation Teams deployed to Afghanistan and were attached to PRTs in Meymana (deployed in September) and Chagcharan (deployed in mid-October), with rotations of personnel planned at three-month intervals. In November, however, Foreign Minister Geir H. Haarde announced that due to safety concerns Icelandic civilian peacekeepers would cease to participate in the PRT in northern Afghanistan, although they would continue to work in the western region while the security situation remained stable there. There are four ICRU members in Sri Lanka with the Norwegian-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM). Currently one Icelandic policeman is in Kosovo with the international police force there. These peacekeeping deployments remain well short of the Icelandic Government's long-stated goal of 50 ICRU peacekeepers in the field "at any given time" in 2006. Wages and costs have apparently far exceeded government projections, and remaining funding has not allowed additional deployments.

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Dialogue  
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Several exchange visits in support of security and antiterrorism occurred between U.S. and Icelandic Government officials in 2005:  
-- In January the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)'s Rotterdam-

based U.S. International Port Security Liaison Officer, with responsibility for Iceland, visited Reykjavik to tour port facilities and share strategies with maritime officials. She noted: "All entities are keenly aware of each other's roles and their successful collaborative work is evident. Icelandic authorities are working to centralize their emergency response efforts, further improving communication as well as national security, e.g. three major ports in Reykjavik have come together to form an Association of Icelandic Ports and also the Icelandic Coast Guard/Maritime Traffic Center is being relocated with the Icelandic Police/Emergency Response Center where incidents can be managed with a more integrated approach."

-- In March the USCG provided Icelandic Coast Guard (ICG) Director General Georg Larusson with a weeklong orientation to USCG personnel, materiel, and facilities on the eastern seaboard.

-- In May Embassy personnel arranged and partially funded extensive U.S. travel and briefings for Jon Bjartmarz, Chief Superintendent, National Commissioner of Police Security Section, to familiarize him with U.S. law enforcement best practices.

-- Also in May, Embassy personnel organized, escorted, and partially funded travel of senior foreign affairs journalists from Icelandic print and broadcast media to Brussels, Vienna, and Sarajevo to study Alliance transformation, post-conflict reconstruction, counter-trafficking, and the broad work of the OSCE in Eurasia.

-- Iceland hosted USCG Commandant Admiral Thomas Collins on a goodwill and familiarization visit July 1-12. In meetings with Larusson and Minister of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs Bjorn Bjarnason, Admiral Collins proposed training and acquisitions for the ICG as well as ways to enhance interoperability.

Following these exchanges Minister Bjarnason announced in September that the Government would purchase a new patrol vessel and a new airplane to replace aging existing assets. Two additional patrol vessels will be refitted. Larusson has maintained political pressure on his government to increase its spending on maritime security. Referring to the 1.8 million square kilometers of Icelandic territorial waters, he warned a civic group in November, "This is probably the only ocean area in the world that is so little monitored." He added that those sailing in the region were probably aware of its vulnerability and could plan "unsuitable acts." He pledged to revise ICG regulations to make weapons available on board patrol vessels and for the first time to give police training to crews, who already enjoy police authority.

-- In November, a team from S/CT briefed senior officials from the Icelandic MFA, Justice Ministry, Police and Coast Guard on State's Foreign Emergency Support Team and other interagency crisis response capabilities. Later that month, the Icelandic Police special forces unit carried out a hostage rescue exercise inside the U.S. Embassy. The Icelanders undertook to continue to work through the Embassy to strengthen counterterrorism contingency planning.

#### ----- Moral Support -----

Icelandic Prime Minister Halldor Asgrimsson condemned the July 7 terrorist attacks on the London transit system by saying they were great acts of cruelty against innocent citizens. He also stated, "These were attacks not only on the British nation but also on our shared democratic and national values." Minister of Justice Bjarnason, responding to questions about Icelandic anti-terror preparedness in the wake of the London bombings, outline a multi-pronged Icelandic approach, including:

-- updating police organization to reduce the number of districts nationwide and achieve economies of scale;  
-- strengthening the Special Unit (an elite SWAT-type police organization) by increasing manpower;

-- increasing monitoring of foreigners;  
-- maintaining Keflavik International Airport's preeminence in use of the most advanced security technology; and  
-- devising plans on how to respond to chemical, biological, or radiological attack.

Iceland is a party to all 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism; and has signed the Nuclear Terrorism Convention. In May Iceland signed both the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism CETS No. 196 and the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism CETS No. 198; both are slated for ratification by the Althing (parliament) in 2006. Speaking at the UN General Assembly in September, both Asgrimsson and then-Foreign Minister David Oddsson supported adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. "Such a convention must unconditionally condemn terrorism. For it to be fully effective, it must include a legal definition of terrorist acts," Oddsson declared. Asgrimsson reiterated, "(A) universal definition is still needed. Terrorism is a threat to us all and must be condemned in all its forms."

#### ----- Exercises -----

The Icelandic Coast Guard hosted its fourth annual explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training exercise, Northern Challenge, from August 29 to September 2. This year's exercise was attended by teams from Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom and Sweden (the first Partnership for Peace team to attend) for a total of 47 EOD technicians. The exercise objectives were:

(1) to provide a realistic training exercise, where NATO/PfP EOD teams could hone their skills and procedures in dealing with a number of EOD/IEDD tasks, and (2) provide a platform for discussion and exchange of ideas regarding EOD and Innovative Explosive Ordnance Disposal (IEDD) operations. Formally the exercise fulfilled the requirements of the 2000 Implementing Agreement Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding between Iceland and the U.S. regarding ICD EOD and IDF cooperation, specifically in the areas of EOD training and exercise.

In support of maritime security, the ICG has given increased attention to scenarios involving large passenger and cargo vessels. In August, the ICG EOD unit conducted a bomb disposal exercise at Sundahofn port in Reykjavik on an American cruise liner, the Seven Seas Navigator. The exercise was a cooperative effort between members of the ICG, the Maritime Control Authority and the ship's security officer. On September 28, the fuel tanker USNS Gianella arrived at the Helguvik NATO fuel pier carrying 9.8 million gallons. For maritime security, the Iceland Defense Force (IDF) requested ICG assistance in pier sweeps and harbor patrol. The ICG EOD unit conducted pier sweeps from September 25 to 27. The ICG cutter Baldur patrolled the harbor during the fuel transfer from September 28 to 29.

#### ----- Contact -----

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